



Plant Materials Program

Responding to Natural Disasters

We have little control over natural disasters like wildfires, snowstorms, droughts, and floods. However, plants offer a natural solution for reducing damage and speeding recovery from natural disasters. Across the country, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Plant Materials Centers and Plant Materials Specialists have selected conservation plants and technology to help landowners protect and heal affected land.



In the western states, we

- Test plants for fire-resistant landscaping and select varieties for burned land restoration.
- Develop highly successful post-fire seeding and revegetation techniques.

In the country's snowbelt, we

- Select plants for living snowfences and windbreaks, such as 'Cardan' green ash, Bridger-Select juniper, 'Sakakawea' silver buffaloberry, 'Midwest' crabapple, and 'Bighorn' sumac.



Throughout the country, we

- Select and release drought-tolerant native plants, particularly warm season grasses like eastern gamagrass.
- Develop reliable methods for establishing plants under drought conditions, and test new water retention products.



Throughout the country, we

- Release plants like 'Ruby' dogwood and 'Streamco' willow to control bank erosion.
- Determine effective ways to seed erosion-prone areas following floods.

In low-lying coastal areas, we

- Select plants like 'Cape' American beachgrass as well as 'Northpa' and 'Southpa' bitter panicgrass for protecting dune systems against hurricanes.
- Test smooth cordgrass resistance to brown marsh die-back, and assess revegetation potential for affected saltmarshes.



For more information, visit <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> and <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>

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